

been hit more than once by heavy shell without appreciable damage, was struck in 'Q' turret. The shell apparently burst inside the turret, as Commander Dannreuther saw the roof blown off. A very heavy explosion followed immediately, evidently caused by the magazine blowing up, and the ship broke in halves and sank at once.

Admiral Hood's was the decisive movement of the engagement, for it crumpled the head of the enemy's line and compelled him to turn first south and then west as Beatty and the Battle Fleet got round him in succession. But for Hood's action, his battle fleet might have got behind its mine-fields unpunished.

This is not the place to introduce matters of political controversy. It must be borne in mind that the British navy has to serve many purposes in all parts of the world, whereas the German navy existed to serve one only. And the exact course of any war is seldom,

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if ever, foreseen. The presence of the Germans on the Belgian coast, for instance, in one way and another deprived the Grand Fleet of many of the units it urgently required. But one thing must be said: namely, that a system which permits civilians to revise the estimates of professional sailors or soldiers does not make for safety. The public demanded Dreadnoughts, which appealed to its imagination — and quite rightly. But the Dreadnoughts were provided at the expense of other things, which the sailors knew to be at least equally necessary. Lord Jellicoe himself was at the Admiralty during a great part of the time of preparation; but neither he nor that sturdy rebel, Lord Fisher himself, could ever hope to get everything the efficiency of the Fleet required. The consequence was that the nation was placed in a position of danger which would have turned its hair gray if it had known it.

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE AS DOCTOR WATSON

BY E. T. RAYMOND

As a literary man, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle may be likened to a plain squire who sits at the table of princes. He is not of their rank, but he is of their circle and atmosphere. It seems absurd to class a humble craftsman with Shakespeare, Scott, Dickens, and Thackeray, but theirs is truly his company. Unlike them he has made no great literature. But he is like them in having created a character everybody knows, a character to be quoted with the same confidence that one men-

tions Falstaff or Pecksniff or Major Pendennis.

True, Sir Arthur has only one such child to his credit, while others have begotten sons and daughters on the patriarchal scale. But it is a great feat. How great one simple test will show. Where else are we to look for a character as distinct, as well-known, and as universally recognizable as Sherlock Holmes? Of all the extremely intelligent men who have produced fiction during the last thirty years — and the

average of writing was never so high — only two, so far as I can recall, pass the great test of quotation in any company. One is Robert Louis Stevenson; the other is the inventor of Sherlock Holmes. Examine the files of a popular newspaper for a week, and you are pretty sure to find one reference to Jekyll and Hyde and two or three to the Conan Doyle hero. But, while few people who talk about Jekyll and Hyde have ever read the story, and still fewer understand its real moral, the man who does not know everything concerning Sherlock Holmes, the cut of his face, the shabbiness of his dressing gown, his indoor pistol practice, the tobacco that he smoked, the cocaine that he injected, the plots that he laid and unraveled, the kings that he patronized — that man is indeed a rarity. Say that somebody reminds you of Sir Willoughby Patterne, and the chances are you will get either a blank look or the smile of embarrassed hypocrisy. Mention Tono-Bungay, and it is an accident if you are understood. But a newspaper read by two million indifferently educated people can be quite sure of comprehension when it prints the familiar headline, 'Sherlock Holmes in Real Life.'

It is, surely, a considerable satire on the modern school of fiction that, priding itself above all on its touch with reality, it has not succeeded in making a character real enough for a policeman to swear to. But the explanation is simple. Analysis is the aim of the novelist, and analysis, while yielding a multitude of facts, obscures and even destroys the truth. There is a quite considerable difference, for example, between an Irish poet and a Jewish banker. But it would take a clever man to distinguish one from the other after a professor of anatomy had quite done with them. He might, indeed, have found a multitude of facts unknown to Who's Who or the Directory

of Directors. He might even have discovered the true physical source of verification in the one and of money making in the other. But he could not justly point to the results of his activity with the remark: 'How lifelike is this poet!' or 'Here you have the breathing embodiment of Lombard Street!' We distinguish things by their shape and color. Analysis shows that color is an illusion, and can only proceed by making shape shapeless.

Sherlock Holmes succeeds, not by his subtlety, but by his simplicity, and even more by the simplicity of the famous Dr. Watson. If there were the smallest ground for suspecting the sincerity of 'my dear Watson,' the whole thing would topple to the ground. It often hovers on the very verge of anticlimax. For Holmes is, after all, no giant. Poe and several Frenchmen have done better in this kind, and so far as Holmes himself is concerned Sir Arthur Conan Doyle owes, perhaps, as much to them as to the Edinburgh professor whose fancy for identifying the trades of patients by their small peculiarities gave him one set of ideas most skillfully used. Sir Arthur's true triumph is the humble Watson. Not great himself, he is the cause of greatness in another. Faith breeds faith. Worship is catching. 'My conviction gains infinitely,' says the sage, 'the moment another soul will believe in it.' Seeing Watson constantly on his knees, we all fall on ours, by mere force of suggestion.

A good many of the old painters were fond of putting themselves somewhere in their pictures. They are generally to be recognized by a peculiar stiffness: the artist painted himself by a looking-glass. One cannot avoid the conviction that some such process obtained in the Sherlock Holmes business, and that Dr. Watson is really the counterfeit presentment of his creator. At any rate, it is certain that Dr. Watson is a

very English Englishman, and that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, though born and educated in Edinburgh, and of Irish blood, is another. There is, too, a great deal of incidental Watsonism in him. It can be seen in his ever-fresh interest in facts, relevant and otherwise. Possibly it is also visible in his deductions from facts. Watson noticed most things, but had a trick of laying emphasis in the wrong place, and getting up all kinds of blind alleys in his pursuit of non-existent clues. Watson's creator, since he abandoned the gracious rôle of entertainer, seems not wholly free from similar tendencies.

It is the fashion for novelists, as soon as they can afford it, to become preachers; the professional preachers retaliating in kind to the best of their ability. Whether this Hamlet-Laertes exchange of weapons really helps either literature or society need not be discussed. But the strength of the tradition could not be better illustrated than in the case of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. One would think him the last to be beguiled out of his true vocation. A fine craftsman in his own line, he is, perhaps, worse fitted than most men of equal intelligence for the task of the historian or the social critic. It is not easy to describe shortly the disability from which he suffers, but one might, perhaps, best express it by calling him a latitudinarian bigot. He is at once very broad and very prejudiced, very illiberally liberal; very dogmatically hostile to dogma.

Take, for example, the business of divorce. Sir Arthur is for making divorce cheap and easy — how cheap and how easy I hesitate to say, for fear of misrepresentation. He may be right, or he may be wrong, on the main question. Can he possibly be right in dismissing as mere antiquated prejudice the objections of millions of earnest, intelligent, disinterested, and upright

men? Then there is his enthusiasm for spiritualism. Here, again, Sir Arthur is quite entitled to his opinion, and has a right to state it. But how can he blame the Wesleyans of Nottingham for not allowing him to lecture in their hall, so that he was forced to speak in a room half the size? No doubt there are, in the immortal words of the Grand Inquisitor, 'Wesleyan Methodists of the most persecuting and bigoted description.' But was this particular act bigoted?

Is it not rather bigoted to say, as he did quite lately, that spiritualism gives the afflicted 'a satisfaction which no creed-bound religion could supply'? How does Sir Arthur know? He cannot possibly speak with authority concerning the spiritual experiences of hundreds of millions of the quick and of the great host of the dead. It is quite open to him, as a free man, to believe that the dogmas of Christianity 'matter little,' and have added 'needlessly to the contentions of the world.' But why, in that case, be at pains to reconcile hatred of our enemies with Christianity? Why be so distressed over the Kaiser making 'the whole conception of religion grotesque,' when you yourself deprecate 'all the haggling claims and the mythical doctrines which have grown up round the name of Christ'? Why complain that the Germans in their warfare 'brought the world of Christ back to the days of Odin'?

It is our good Dr. Watson again, wavering between the curing of patients and the tracking of criminals. We know his quality as a detective; we can only infer how the patients got on. The same English desire to have it all ways is apparent in Dr. Watson's maker. He wants to have the best of all possible and impossible worlds, to be at ease both in Zion and Valhalla, as well as in a scientific lecture room. It is all very human and natural. The

majority of us are made that way, and to a story teller it is no disadvantage to feel sympathy with very different and inconsistent things. The teacher, however, must be a little 'dogmatic.' He must be quite sure that two and two make four, and maintain that they

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never can make sixteen, even at the risk of 'adding to the contentions' of the school room.

But why be a teacher, anyway, when you can afford not to? It is a dull business for one who has had the world at his feet as a creator.

THE REAL ENGLAND

BY REGINALD LENNARD

ON a casual meeting at dinner or in a railway carriage, one usually learns more about a man from his appearance than from what he happens to say. Spoken words are the expression of the moment's mood, and that may well be exceptional and at best will reveal only one side of a person's nature. But in a face what is revealed is, so to say, permanent and real — it is the real man we see there. Faces, no doubt, are more difficult to understand than words, and some faces are little better than masks; but, on the whole, appearances, if they sometimes tell little, seldom deceive, for if a man's face is a mask, that fact is generally evident at once, and it is in itself a fact more expressive of character than any haphazard series of remarks is likely to be. And perhaps it is with nations as with individuals; only the face of a nation must surely be found rather in the appearance of the countryside and of the human handiwork which has shaped and modified it than in the actual countenances of the individuals who compose the nation, and while in the case of individuals it is the faces of the young which are easiest to read, it is the old

and long-established nations which have most clearly written the expression of their quality over the length and breadth of the land, as it is also the ancient nations which have partaken most of the character of their dwelling-place and have, as it were, received the influence of its scenery into their very soul.

There may be something fanciful in this idea, but I feel sure that the soldiers from overseas, to whom war and the armistice following the war have given the chance of getting a first-hand impression of England, will not carry away the truest possible memory of her, if their attention is confined to the manifestations of her temporary moods. The Englishman is perhaps less himself in a moment of excitement than a Frenchman is, or an Italian; and our soldier guests have seen us under influences which produced unparalleled excitement — though all the time the real England was not the England of spy-hunts and food-queues, of flag-days and 'Feed-the-Guns' weeks, or even the England which in a fit of thoughtless joy destroyed in Trafalgar Square trophies of war that were the